

the words that next fell on my ear; they seemed for a moment to still the excitement I was in. Mr. Elliot stood by my bed. I began talking rapidly again, in my anxiety to tell him that I was really sorry now. But he stopped me.

'Be silent, Morris,' he said quietly, 'and listen to me. I know what you want to say, and when you are a little stronger I will hear it, but just now it is wrong to make yourself worse by talking. But though you must not speak, remember God knows your thoughts. You can hear what I say, and join with me in your heart, in asking Him for pardon and help. We will thank Him together for having spared you thus far, and ask Him, if it be His will, to give you a longer life, in which to serve Him better.'

It was just what I wanted, and as the words of prayers I had known years ago, and forgotten, came back to me, I kept quite still to listen. I was completely unhinged, and had no strength to struggle against my own thoughts.

'Now, Mrs. Morris,' said he presently, 'you go and lie down for a bit and leave Harry to me.'

She consented, and Mr. Elliot came and sat long by my side. I soon found myself telling him all I had gone through, and, encouraged by his sympathy, I told him also how terrible the approach of death had been to me, and how dreadful it had been to have nothing to hold by in those awful moments. Mr. Elliot listened and pointed out to me how it had all been caused by my own wilfulness in refusing to listen to any warning, in stifling the prickings of my own conscience, till it had ceased to make itself heard; and he made me go further back and own that the beginning of it all had been the deliberate listening to what I knew was wrong; and he showed me how I had been led on by my own conceit, saying sharp things—whether they were wrong or right no matter—for the pleasure of being applauded.

I cannot remember all he said, and besides, there are some things one feels, but does not talk about, only I know I was a different man all my life for what Mr. Elliot said to me that night. I began to get well

now—better every day. The men kept on sending messages of inquiry; Mr. Elliot declared that he was stopped every two or three minutes by some of them.

'You certainly are a very popular fellow, Morris,' he said, laughingly, one day when he came in.

'Perhaps I am, sir,' I replied. 'But wait a bit.' You see I meant to mend my ways, but I felt rather uncomfortable at the idea of what some of the fellows would think of the change, and rather dreaded going back to work. Although I had laughed at others, I didn't like being laughed at myself, and I expected as much.

As for making speeches, I had almost resolved never to attempt it again. I felt so strongly, now, that I was responsible for every word I had said, and for the harm my words had done that I could never undo.

But before I went to work, something made me change my mind. One or two of the men dropped in to see me during the week, and from them I heard that a certain Smith, holding very free opinions, was coming to stay a day or two with a friend in the town, and was going to our room on Saturday evening. I had heard him speak several times before and knew the sort of thing he would say. A great many of us, bad as we were, disliked his remarks, he went further than the worst of us had dared to do. But what could I do to prevent it? Could I go myself to the place and say . . . what? Why, I could speak up and tell the fellows why I spoke—what had changed my opinions—why I was sure there was a God, and we were all bound to try and serve Him. Suppose they only laughed at me, and I had been accustomed to so much applause?

No, I could not do it. The cowardly feeling in my heart whispered that I was not strong enough yet, that it would be too much for me. But conscience suggested, 'If you can go to work on Monday, you can talk for ten minutes on Saturday; this is one little step in the right way.' I plucked up heart and went.

The room was full, but Smith and his friend were not there, though I gathered